

Climate change could bring rising obesity rates

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(HealthDay)—You can add obesity and its related health risks to the

long list of threats posed by climate change, researchers report.

In a new review, researchers from Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia outlined the association between climate change and obesity.

As global temperatures increase, people may become less physically active and less able to burn excess fat, putting them at increased risk of being overweight or obese.

In turn, that could lead to greater emissions of [climate change](#)-causing [greenhouse gas emissions](#) as overweight and obese people make greater use of fossil fuel-burning transportation such as cars instead of physically active ways of getting around such as walking or cycling.

One of the [health consequences](#) of being overweight or obese is a higher risk of cancer, according to the authors of the review, published recently in the journal [Hormone and Metabolic Research](#).

"Obesity is associated with risk of various malignancies, including breast and endometrial cancers, cancer of the esophagus, gastric cardia, colon, rectum, liver, gallbladder, pancreas, kidney, [thyroid gland](#), and multiple myeloma," Dr. Christian Koch, director of the Fox Chase Cancer Center's section of endocrinology, and colleagues wrote.

There are a number of reasons why overweight and [obese people](#) are more likely to develop cancer, including an increase in insulin levels that can put them at higher risk for colon, kidney, prostate and endometrial cancer.

In women, fat tissue can produce estrogens that can promote endometrial, breast and ovarian cancer.

In terms of diet, "what we need to go back to is 'less is more' to address the problem," Koch said in a Fox Chase news release. "It is better to have an excellent quality product that would cost more but is healthier rather than something that is [lower quality](#), cheaper and less healthy. We need to look at the whole picture and how we can make this world better."

How food is sourced is also part of the picture. For example, the Mediterranean diet and others lower in meat "have been estimated to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 72%, land use by 58%, and energy consumption by 52%," the researchers wrote.

"This article is about raising awareness about how things interconnect; the [average person](#) needs to be aware of how these factors affect each other," Koch said.

More information: The U.S. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases has more on the [health risks of excess weight and obesity](#).

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